research on endocrine disrupters. Results of that research could be of value in determining environmental impacts on aquatic organisms.

## Fish Habitat Loss and Degradation

Healthy fish habitat is critical to sustainable fisheries. The fish habitat protection and pollution prevention provisions of Canada's Fisheries Act provide for fish habitat conservation throughout Canada. The act prohibits the harmful alteration, disruption, or destruction of fish habitat unless authorized by the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans or under regulations. The fish habitat provisions of the act are followed by the pollution prevention provisions, which are Canada's most powerful tool to prevent pollution of fishery waters. These provisions set out a prohibition against the addition to fishery waters of any substance that is harmful to fish, unless that addition is allowed by a regulation under the Fisheries Act of the Canadian federal Parliament.

Canada's Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat provides a comprehensive framework for the conservation, restoration, and development of fish habitats. The policy's broad objective is to achieve a net gain in the productive capacity of Canada's fish habitats. In the day-to-day management of fish habitat, the policy's guiding principle of no net loss of productive capacity promotes sustainable development by requiring mitigation to avoid damage to fish habitat or compensation to replace destroyed habitat. It also promotes an integrated approach to resource management and establishes a framework for reconciling competing uses.

## **Canadian Biodiversity Strategy**

In 1992, Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity. The Canadian Biodiversity Strategy, developed jointly by federal, provincial, and territorial governments, puts commitments under the convention into a Canadian context. The strategy includes strategic directions aimed at conserving and sustainably using marine and freshwater ecosystems.

One of the first programs of work developed under the convention is the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, which provides a useful framework and ecosystem approach for international activities to conserve marine ecosystems. Canada sees the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, with The original Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Program (HRSEP) of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans began in 1996/97 and was a three-year, multimillion-dollar program that complemented the Pacific Salmon Revitalization Strategy. Since then, HRSEP has contractually funded hundreds of worthwhile habitat restoration works, stewardship initiatives, and stock-rebuilding activities operated and administered by a variety of community groups and agencies.

The Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP) is the Atlantic Canada member of a family of six large ecosystem initiatives located across Canada, which includes the Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative, located on Canada's Pacific coast. ACAP is a network of thirteen community-driven, watershed-based ecosystem initiatives located across the four Atlantic provinces. Since 1991, citizens, community organizations, privatesector organizations, municipalities, universities, First Nations representatives, and a number of federal and provincial government departments have been collaborating to develop broadly supported strategies for the restoration and sustainable use of their watersheds.

To date, more than 400 projects have been undertaken involving hundreds of organizations and thousands of volunteers. Results have included pollution prevention, restored habitats, reduced waste, upgraded sewage treatment facilities, improved energy efficiency, the establishment of new parks, the creation of artificial wetlands, reduced risks to human health, and increased employment.